

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)
TYPE: Official Product
DATE: April 30, 2003***

Part 1 - Mission Connection

1. Product/Service Description:

The Offshore Waters Forecast (OFF) is an alphanumeric product providing information on marine conditions such as: wind, waves, visibility, icing, and significant weather. This product is prepared by the Tropical Prediction Center (TPC), Ocean Prediction Center (OPC), and the Alaska and Honolulu Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) marine area of responsibility (MAOR). The MAOR extends seaward from the Coastal Waters Forecast boundary out to several hundred nautical miles or cover large bodies of water, e.g., the Caribbean Sea.

2. Purpose/Intended Use:

The product is issued routinely at least twice per day, and updated when necessary, to describe marine analysis and forecast conditions including any event-driven marine and tropical hazards occurring or expected over the MAOR for the five day forecast period. This product is intended to provide information assisting in the protection of life and property, and enhancing the nations economy.

3. Audience:

The target audience for this product includes: ocean going vessels, barge operators, private maritime organizations, recreational mariners, commercial fishing vessels, and military and government agencies.

4. Presentation Format:

The product is made available in alphanumeric format, and is prepared in a consistent manner by the offices mentioned above.

5. Feedback Method:

Continuous feedback is available via an Internet page e-mail link to the program managers in the Marine and Coastal Weather Services. Feedback on this product is obtained at Focus Group meetings, Boat Shows, and Customer Surveys.

Technical and policy questions, and comments for the OFF may be addressed to:

National Weather Service
Attn: Brian LaMarre W/OS21
Marine Program Manager
1325 East-West Highway, Room 13118
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3285

or e-mail questions and comments to: Brian.Lamarre@noaa.gov.

Part 2 - Technical

1. **Format and Science Basis:**

The OFF product is disseminated in alphanumeric format and contains a narrative synopsis, and descriptive phrases for forecast marine conditions for specified temporal intervals out to the day five forecast period. The product describes significant weather elements and hazardous marine and tropical events including warnings. The product is written in a standard and concise format with all required weather elements.

Coordination, by telephone and the Hurricane Hotline, with adjacent WFOs and the NWS National Centers with marine and tropical responsibility (TPC and OPC) is done by the issuing office to ensure the products are consistent and compatible.

2. **Availability:**

The product is disseminated routinely twice per day, and is updated on an unscheduled basis. The product is made available via various means of dissemination such as: the Internet, U.S. Coast Guard Radio Broadcasts, amateur “ham” radio nets, the NOAA Weather Radio, and the NOAA Weather Wire. Additional information on product dissemination is available at: <http://weather.gov/om/marine/home.htm>.

The following Internet site is one location to access the OFF product:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/zone/wrdoffmz.htm>.

3. **Additional Information:**

A description of Marine and Coastal Services policy, areas of responsibility, abbreviations and definitions, standards and guidelines, and means of product dissemination for the OFF product is described in NWS Instructions 10-301 to 10-304, and in 10-311, which are made available on the Internet at:

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/010/operation_services.htm.